



# Connecting with Nature

Spring has sprung! Nicer weather and more daylight hours make it the perfect time to get outside and enjoy all that Mother Nature has to offer.

Over the past year, many of us have found strategies to keep ourselves busy while hunkered down at home, or – when we can't stand to be in the house any longer (and when it's safe to do so) – we've taken to the outdoors for some fresh air and a break. As a matter of fact, the COVID-19 pandemic has pushed people into the great outdoors to walk, bike, hike, garden and more in record numbers.

There's a good reason why getting outside has proven to be a good break from the increased levels of stress we've all been facing – it can do wonders for relieving anxiety, stress and depression. Spending more time outdoors, surrounded by nature and fresh air, increases energy by 90% and being outdoors for just 20 minutes a day is enough to boost vitality levels.

For this month's theme, we've compiled some resources to help you make the most of the spring weather and reap the health benefits too. Whether you plan to work in the garden, go walking around your neighbourhood or at local parks or trails, people of all ages report experiencing relaxing or invigorating effects after enjoying the great outdoors. We challenge you to get outside for 20 minutes a day this month and encourage you to share a picture of your favourite outdoor activity on [Yammer](#).

You can learn about the mental health benefits of being outdoors in this [YouTube video](#).

Check out the resources below to learn more about connecting with nature:

- [Mental Health Benefits of the Outdoors](#)
- [Never Hiked Before? Here's What You Need to Know Before Hitting the Trails](#)
- [39 Fun Ways Kids Can Play Outside this Spring](#)
- [8 Great Health Benefits of Gardening & How to Start One:](#)
  - [On a Balcony](#)
  - [In Your Yard](#)

Checking in with your mental health is important. Please take the opportunity to check in on your mental health and access resources for support. You can find recently updated resources that can help [here](#).

Please remember that you are not alone during this time. Reach out to family, friends, co-workers, your supervisor or any leaders within the organization as we are here to help. You can also speak to our EFAP provider.

Access your EFAP 24/7 by phone, web or mobile app:

## Canada:

- Call 1-877-847-4525
- Email [support@resourcesforyourlife.com](mailto:support@resourcesforyourlife.com)
- Visit <http://ca.resourcesforyourlife.com>
- COMPANY CODE: BMWeCare
- Download the 'ICONNECT YOU' app from the App Store or Google Play
- PASSCODE: 149301

## United States:

- Call 1-800-466-8282
- Access Code 8282
- Visit [www.AlternativesEAP.com](http://www.AlternativesEAP.com)
- Download the 'Alternative EAP' app from the App Store or Google Play